



Press Release

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Col. Michael J. Taliento Jr. addresses Soldiers and guests at the Area III change of command June 1 at Camp Humphreys

New commander takes charge of Area III

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CAMP HUMPHREYS, REPUBLIC OF KOREA – Soldiers, staff and guests of the United States Support Activity, Area III gathered at Freedom Field June 1 as Col. Michael J. Taliento Jr. took command of Area III and Camp Humphreys.

The U.S. Army Support Activity, Area III provides force protection and base support activities for U.S. military installations in the central region of the Republic of Korea, including Camp Humphreys, Camps Long and Eagle in Wonju and U.S. Army facilities at Suwon Air Base and a remote

mountaintop communication site. It is one of four areas that comprise the Installation Management Agency Korea Region, headquartered at Yongsan Garrison in Seoul.

Taliento replaces outgoing commander Col. Mike Clay, who is taking a Pacific Command staff assignment in Hawaii.

Most recently director for plans and design for the Afghan National Army while assigned to the Office of Military Cooperation in Kabul, Afghanistan, Taliento - a helicopter pilot rated in the UH-1, AH-1, OH-58, UH-60 and the MH-6 helicopters - assumes command of Camp Humphreys, considered to be the busiest helicopter base outside of the United States. Area III and Camp Humphreys supports attack helicopter, air ambulance and heavy lift helicopter units, along with more than 80 other tenant units.

After passing the organizational colors to the new commander, IMA-Korea Region Director Brig. Gen. John A. Macdonald addressed those gathered for the change of command ceremony.

"A change of command is a time-honored military tradition to recognize the outgoing commander for his efforts and successes in mission accomplishment, in providing for his Soldiers and in improving his command," said Macdonald.

Macdonald cited the "zealousness" in which Clay presided over improvements at Camp Humphreys during the past two years, including a new post exchange, an Army lodge, the first Army funded family housing in Korea, a kindergarten through sixth grade elementary school and groundbreaking for a new commissary, among other quality of life and community relations improvements.

"You leave a great foundation for Colonel Michael Taliento Jr. to continue on making Camp Humphreys and Area III the hub of Korea," Macdonald told Clay.

"Colonel Taliento, welcome to Freedom Country," Macdonald continued. "You come with great credentials and with a tremendous reputation for having a passion for Soldiers and soldiering. The next two years will be great as we watch Camp Humphreys continue to grow as the centerpiece of Korea."

Following Clay's remarks (see related story on page 22), Taliento made his first speech as Area III commander as his wife Tamela, son Christian and daughter Emily proudly watched along with tenant unit commanders and Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians, family members and guests, including local Korean community and business leaders.

"I am extremely grateful for the warm reception you have provided my family. You have made our arrival here in Korea truly something special," Taliento told the Soldiers, U.S. and Korean civilians, family members and Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army Soldiers at the ceremony.

"Fellow commanders, Soldiers, families and local community leaders throughout Area III, I look forward to continuing the work in progress that will make Area III the premier stability assurance platform in Northeast Asia and the assignment of choice for our Soldiers stationed here in Korea."

Following the change of command ceremony, Col. Taliento and his family greeted well-wishers at a reception at the Camp Humphreys Community Activities Center. Among the local Korean civilian and military dignitaries and community leaders were Pyongtaek City Council chairman Yi Ik-chae, Chief of Police Choe Sang-myong, Paengsung Eub village chief Yu Chin-ha, 7th Republic of Korea Air Force Air Communication Service Group commander, Col. Baek Kye-kun.

The 51st Republic of Korea Army Band provided ceremonial music during the change of command.